

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 4-11 are pending. Claims 1, 4 and 11 have been amended. The amendment is supported by, e.g., Fig. 6 and para. [0043] of the specification. No new matter has been presented.

Claims 1 and 4-11 are rejected as being unpatentable under 35 USC 103(a) over Takuya in view of Kitani and Komiya. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1, as amended, recites “the spacer is configured to cause a first portion of the original document to be out of contact with the reading transparent member at a location over the original document reading position and a second portion of the original document to come in contact with the reading transparent member at a location downstream from the original document reading position relative to the original document conveyance direction as the first portion of the original document is conveyed over the original document reading position and a trailing edge portion of the original document passes a position very close to or in contact with a sloping surface of the spacer.” This feature is not disclosed or suggested by the cited references, individually or in combination.

The Examiner relies on Komiya as allegedly disclosing this feature. As shown in Figs. 3-7 of Komiya, however, the spacer 8 causes the original document to come in contact with the reading transparent member 2 over the area of the original document reading position 5 and to come out of contact with the reading transparent member 2 shortly after the contact. The original document in Komiya does not come back in contact with the reading transparent member 2 again at any location downstream from the original document reading position. In contrast, amended claim 1 requires the second portion to *come in contact* with the reading transparent member at a location *downstream from the original document reading position* relative to the original document conveyance direction. Accordingly, Komiya fails to disclose or suggest this feature. Neither Takuya nor Kitani disclose or suggest this feature, as conceded by the Examiner in the Office Action.

In addition, claim 1 has been amended to recite "a distance between the reading transparent member and the first portion of the original document is less than approximately 0.3 mm at the location over the original document reading position." This feature is also not taught or suggested by the combination of the cited references, individually or in combination.

Accordingly, claims 1 is allowable. Claims 4 and 11 recite similar features as claim 1 and are similarly allowable. Claims 5-10 depend from claim 4 and are allowable for at least the same reasons.

In view of the above, this application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to **Deposit Account No. 03-1952** referencing docket no.

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Respectfully submitted,

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